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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Reverend Stephen A. Owenby, Senior Pastor, Stewartsville Baptist Church, Laurinburg, North Carolina, offered the following prayer:

Our sovereign Lord, we praise You for the freedom to enter Your heavenly throne room. We deserve not Your favor nor are we worthy of Your grace. All we can ask is, "Forgive us our transgressions, grant us salvation and guide us in the way of righteousness."

We have prayed, "God bless America." You have. "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God." May we not depend upon our own ingenuity, but in You alone.

I offer thanks for these men and women You have lifted up to serve their fellow countrymen. In James chapter 1, you tell us, "If any lack wisdom, let him ask." So we ask, Please grant to these servants the wisdom necessary to carry out Your will for our Nation. We ask this in Jesus' name and for His sake. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from California (Mr. CAMPBELL) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING REVEREND STEPHEN A. OWENBY

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from North Carolina is recognized.

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an individual here with us who has dedicated his life to the service of others in his congregation and in his community. Pastor Steve Owenby is a selfless person who continually exemplifies servant leadership. I want to express my appreciation for his witness and the difference he makes in the lives of others each day, and thank him for being here with us to deliver this morning's prayer.

Steve has been married to his loving wife, Donna, for almost 21 years and has three wonderful children, Megan, Josh and Christy.

As a young adult, Steve began his life of service in the United States Air Force where he served 4 years honorably. He later felt called to the ministry and attended Liberty University, where he completed his Master of Theology.

He is currently the Senior Pastor of Stewartsville Baptist Church in Laurinburg, North Carolina. Stewartsville is a member of the Southern Baptist Convention and currently has about 800 members. It is a vibrant congregation that has a strong focus on missions, to the credit of Pastor Owenby and his family.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in appreciation for Steve's many years of service as he leads his family, congregation, and community. I pray that others may follow his lead so that they too would understand the true meaning of life.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will recognize 10 one-minute speeches on each side.

MORE GOOD NEWS ABOUT THE ECONOMY

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share more good news with the American people about our economy.

Yesterday, the Commerce Department reported that consumer spending shot up by nine-tenths of a percent in January, which is the strongest gain in 6 months. In addition, Americans' personal incomes rose by seven-tenths of a percent, which is the highest rate since September.

Clearly, our economy's positive momentum is a direct result of the pro-growth agenda of our President and our Republican-led Congress.

We are the party that is holding the line on fiscal responsibility and showing our commitment to continuing economic growth. We are the party that is working to improve the lives of the American people by lowering taxes, enacting legal reform, and decreasing government interference in the lives of entrepreneurs and small business owners.

Democrats, on the other hand, continue to promote their tax-and-spend policies, because they think they know how to spend your hard-earned money better than you do. My Republican colleagues and I know better than that.

JUXTAPOSITION OF TWO NEWS STORIES

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I want to call the attention of the House to the juxtaposition of two news stories: one that says, relating to 9/11, Federal officials were repeatedly warned in the months before the September 11, 2001, terror attacks that Osama bin Laden

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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and al Qaeda were planning aircraft hijacking and suicide attacks according to a new report that the Bush administration has been suppressing.

And this, from the front page of today's Washington Post: a newly leaked video recording the high-level government deliberation the day before Hurricane Katrina hit shows disaster officials emphatically warning President Bush that the storm posed a catastrophic threat to New Orleans and the gulf coast, and a grim-faced Bush personally assuring State leaders that his administration was fully prepared, quote-unquote, to help.

Do we see a pattern here? 9/11, Katrina? They knew something was going to happen and they did not act. They knew that if they went into Iraq that we were looking at a disaster, that there was no way we were going to be able to run that country.

They know that global climate change poses a threat to the entire planet. Nothing is being done. There is a pattern of recklessness, indifference, callousness. The implications are deadly for the people of the United States.

CHILDREN'S SAFETY ACT

(Mr. FOLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, last September the House overwhelmingly passed H.R. 3132, the Children's Safety Act.

This bill will, among other things, overhaul and strengthen our Nation's sex offender registration and notification laws.

Over the past few years we have lost too many children to the hands of these pedophiles: Jessica Lunsford, Jetseta Gage, Sarah Lunde, Megan Kanka, Jacob Wetterling, just to name a few.

While it may not be on the national news, there are still stories every day of children being hurt by these predators.

We still have over 150,000 offenders missing, and those numbers are growing.

Mr. Speaker, the House did its job last fall by passing that bill. Now it is time for the other Chamber.

I applaud the Senate majority leader's recent decision to cosponsor the Senate version of the sex offender bill and his commitment that he made the other day to victims' parents to move the bill soon.

We must pass this bill, and we must do it now before another victim is killed.

IN SEARCH OF A COMPETENT CONSERVATIVE

(Mr. EMANUEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, by now we have all seen the Katrina tape of the President being briefed on the mag-

nitude of the upcoming hurricane disaster. The tape clearly shows that the President and his administration knew about Katrina's magnitude, regardless of their after-action denial.

All I can say is forget the compassionate conservative that we were promised in 2000. At this point I would settle for a competent conservative.

Remember, this administration repeatedly maintained that if American leaders in Iraq needed more troops all they needed to do was ask. But now we know that the President's top man in Iraq, Paul Bremer, asked for more troops right after the invasion and the President and the Secretary of Defense failed to respond.

This administration said that the intelligence it used as a case for the war was flawed. But Paul Pillar, a high-ranking CIA official, recently revealed that the administration intentionally distorted and cherry-picked the intelligence in order to justify the prescribed decision.

Today, we are seeing the failure of those decisions. This administration said that the Medicare prescription drug benefit would cost no more than \$400 billion. The real cost of the benefit, nearly \$800 billion, and the administration knew all along the true cost.

The President's people say people do not need to worry about security, and then we found out that neither the President nor the Secretary of Defense knew that the United Arab Emirates was about to take over the six major American ports. We do not need a compassionate conservative, a fiscal conservative. We need a competent conservative.

OUR ECONOMY IS ON A ROLL

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, if you get your news from the mainstream media, you probably don't know that our economy is on a roll.

Our tax policies, the tax relief and reform we passed in 2003 and 2005, helped get government out of the way of America's entrepreneurs, and our unemployment rate is now lower than it was in the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s.

Those across the aisle who voted against our tax relief for Americans, and against our tax reform, say that Americans are not paying enough and that the tax relief costs the government too much. Imagine that. They think government has the first right of refusal on your paycheck. Well, they are wrong on that.

Our tax relief generated \$160 billion more in tax revenues in 2004 and 2005 than what was anticipated, than what was expected.

Mr. Speaker, the liberals in this body think that tax relief is a gift from the government to the American worker. They are wrong on that. We Repub-

licans know that they are wrong. We know taxes are a gift that the American taxpayer sends to Washington.

EDUCATION CUTS IN THE BUDGET

(Mr. OLVER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, in his State of the Union speech, President Bush said: "Our greatest advantage in the world has always been our educated, hardworking, ambitious people, and we are going to keep that edge. But the President's budget for next year cuts education by more than \$2 billion. His budget freezes the maximum award for Pell grants for the third year in a row. That means Pell grants will be worth almost 10 percent less than they were just 5 years ago.

His budget cuts hundreds of millions of dollars from loan programs, making it more difficult for half a million low- and moderate-income students to get the financial aid they need to stay in college.

His budget totally eliminates funding for TRIO Upward Bound that helps students trying to be the first person from their family to go to college. Yet President Bush's budget adds over \$350 billion to the national debt that our children and grandchildren will have to pay.

Americans lose when the President's actions contradict his promises.

STATE OF THE UNION'S HEALTH CARE

(Mr. MURPHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, the rapidly rising cost of health care has put quality coverage out of the reach of millions of families. Too many cannot afford to see their doctor. Too many put off early treatment. Too many are overwhelmed by hospital bills. Too many meet a wall of bureaucracy that stands between them and their doctor. This system costs too many lives and too many dollars.

Each side of the aisle has offered solutions: national health care on one side of the aisle, health savings accounts on the other. But these two plans deal with payments. Neither solves the problem of costly errors and inefficiency. Cost shifting is not cost savings. They only focus on who is paying, when we need to reform what we are paying for.

Electronic medical records, electronic prescribing, eliminating hospital-borne infections, accurate dates on prescription drugs, expanding patients' care management, ending defensive medicine and allowing doctors to volunteer at community health centers are among the reforms our Nation needs.

Any of us would reach out to save the life of one person. We must reform the